

A visit with John Murphy

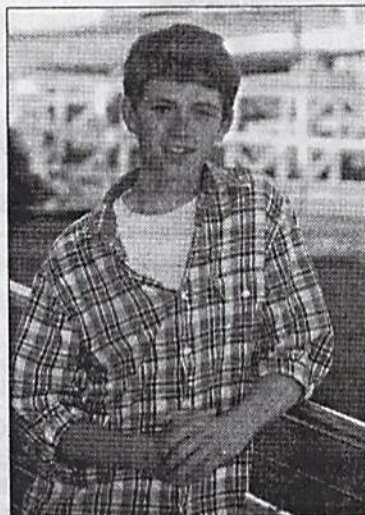
DHS senior dedicated to giving back

By SARAH COUGHLIN
CLIPPER CONTRIBUTOR

With Thanksgiving right around the corner and in the spirit of giving thanks for what we have, we recently chatted with John Murphy, a Duxbury High School senior for whom giving back is a part of everyday life. Active with First Parish church and an avid musician and sailor, Murphy told us why it means a lot to him to devote his time and energy to others.

How did you become involved with First Parish? My family has always been a part of the church.

Did you grow up attending services at First Parish? Yes, I grew up in town and my mom actually grew up here too, and went to First Parish as a girl.



John Murphy volunteers through his Church, First Parish.

THE MURPHY FILE

Favorite Book: The Things They Carried

Favorite movie: School of Rock

Family: Mom and Dad, only child

Pet Peeve: Slow drivers

Hobbies: Playing guitar or bass, listening to music, sailing

What is your favorite class in school and why? Probably English or History. I always have a really great teacher, and the stuff sticks with me. I have a knack at finding the importance of things, which helps me in both of those classes.

Who do you look up to? There's no one in particular. I look up to my uncle Chris for having an unbelievable attitude, always being hard at work, having a good sense of humor, and his ingenuity. I also really idolize John Lennon for his musical genius, larger than life persona, and his free-thinking. He was right about so many things, and said/sang his message so beautifully. He was a poet.

Did your parents...
the importance of getting involved with the church? Yes they did. I can remember not always wanting to go to Sunday school as a little kid, and they knew how important the church community was, so I was pushed a little harder to keep up good attendance.

Do many other kids your age volunteer at the church as well? Every year two youths are the coordinator and the co-coordinator of a program that donates and serves meals at a local soup kitchen. This year I'm the coordinator. The youth group H.I.P. also volunteers twice a year and we go as a group; it's a lot of fun.

Do you go to the soup kitchen each week? No, our church makes the meals for every fourth Saturday of every month.

Do the people there express their appreciation to you? Every time we go, people always say "thanks" and sort of take the meal as charity. But there are always a few people every time we go that appreciate the simple importance of volunteering our food, time, and effort. It's those heart-felt "thank yous" that make going month after month so fulfilling.

Why do you think it is important to volunteer your time and energy to the poor? Because these people are in need, and going once a month to help out, just with making a meal, can really make a difference.

What is the hardest part about being in charge of the

What is your favorite part? Being looked at in the eye by someone that you know has lived a really hard, hard life, and being thanked by them. When someone stops to talk with you and looks at you with bright sunken eyes, and tells you how much they appreciate what you're doing, it forces you to come back time and time again because it really matters to them.

What's the most important thing you've learned from your involvement with the church? To think independently - that's something that has been developed in me my entire life, through the church community, and it's an enormous part of who I am.

Will you continue to be involved with church or the community while in college? I know I would love to, but I'm not sure exactly how I would do that, so probably not.

Do you know what you would like to study? Not exactly - I know I want the liberal arts route; I love the humanities and music.

What do you hope to do when you graduate from college? I'm really not sure yet, that's sort of what I'm planning to figure out in college.

Do you think today's high school students recognize the importance of giving back to the community? Not at all. At least, not in this town. The vast majority of kids I see are aware that places like Brockton exist, and they know they're bad, exactly